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[462] deposit naturally acquires the shape of the pot, which is finally overheated and bursts, while the salt block remains intact.

When the salt is finally prepared, the family group returns to the village. The temporary installations are abandoned and may be used by other families who may do with them as they please.

The salt is divided into two parts.

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422 One part makes up the family reserves, reckoned according to the needs of each family in the group, clan, or village which undertook the exploitation. The rest is divided equally among all the members who took part in [110] the harvest, except that the chief and the woman who was in charge of the burning receive double shares.

The salt reserved for family needs is used in the preparation of food and remains the inalienable property of the family. The share distributed to the participants in the undertaking becomes their private property.

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435 Each one of them, man or woman, disposes of his share as he sees fit. Most often the natives use this as trade goods. Among certain tribes, notably the Mosengere, Wadia, Basakata, and Bobaie, the salt blocks are used as currency or as a common trade item whose value is determined by the weight.

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435 Before our [Ed., European] penetration into the region and more especially before the introduction of legal tender and its imposition by the administration, salt played a much more important part in the economic life of these primitives.

At the present time, it is used only in local transactions.

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326 The blacksmith and his family, for example, never participate in the preparation of salt. He exchanges the products of his trade, knives, arrowheads, or spearheads, for the stock of the salt makers. [111]

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437 It even quite frequently happens that the salt makers sell their surplus as a mere commodity to the highest bidder. They bring it to market, display it for sale, haggle about the price in the same fashion as they do for manioc tubers, smoked fish, smoked meat, or baskets of peanuts.

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562 It is singular and interesting to note that the proceeds from this sale do not entirely go to the woman who owns the salt.

2. The nature of walo valuables

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[301] The walo primarily consists of copper and brass rings. Wrought metal objects (bifeko), such as spears, knives, or axes are also added.
[326] Nowadays a part may be made up of simple brass or iron (steel) bars.
[435] Goats may be given in addition; a she-goat is worth 5 to 6 rings (nowadays 10), and a he-goat, 3 to 4 bakonga (nowadays 6 to 7). One or more elónjé bells are greatly prized as gifts.

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435 Payment in iron or copper chains (bengé-nyola), in various kinds of bead necklaces, and in leopard's teeth has almost entirely disappeared. Formerly, certain kinds of beads had great value; the big, round bluish-white ones (lonyóngu, pl. nnyóngu) were worth 1 konga each, the big, oblong blackish ones, cylindrical or rectangular in shape, 2 to 3 centimeters in diameter and 5 to 10 centimeters long (called nkángé) were worth one slave or, nowadays, 20 to 25 bakonga each.

583^x Copper (konga) and brass (kongo) are the most important of all. Thus paying the bride price is often referred to as énga la kongo la konga.

The statement by R. P. Kaptein (in Congo, 1922, Vol. 1, pp. [14] 452-543) that original valuables were the benkata, the bingetele, and the mitako is based on an error. [132] The first two types of valuables, also called bendóngu by some tribes, were used exclusively by the Ntómbe of Lake Tumba and the adjacent Ekonda (Bosanga, Balingó, Lonyanyanga, etc.). The mitako, known in Lonkundo as ngelo, [436] singular longelo, are not native; this monetary unit was introduced by the Independent State.

[177] The practice of making the payment at least partially in money or in objects of European origin (such as fabrics, blankets, sewing machines, trunks, household utensils, etc.) is gradually being introduced. Before the crisis it was already very popular among "white people."

3. The source of the valuables

A young man obtains the valuables for the bride price in various ways. The most usual way and the one which also conforms best to the Nkundó's familial and social regulations is the use of valuables

304 been the name used by the southern peoples to designate their neighbors to the north whose real name they did not know. The custom of deforming the teeth tends to disappear rapidly. The younger generation already refuses to submit to it, and we often heard the natives with filed teeth referred to as basengi, that is, "savages." The deformation of the teeth is accomplished with a small iron chisel and a wooden mallet. The village blacksmith does this for a small fee. The teeth are broken with short, sharp blows while the patient is seated with his head against the knees of the blacksmith, who stands behind the patient. The operation is very painful and takes several sittings. The last ones are for the filing, which is done with a small native file.

302 The native takes special pains with his hairdo, which sometimes is a true little marvel the fruit of long and patient work.

Both men and women attach great importance to this. They strive [175] to surpass themselves and to achieve the most coquettish coiffure possible. Since every native is a born hair stylist and they aid each other with complete unselfishness, the hairdo not



Fig. 94. A Balesa with a Small Goatee and with Eyelashes and Eyebrows Carefully Plucked.

only varies from one tribe to another, but the most disparate types are found within the same tribe, according to our observation.

A very popular method is to smear the hair with a rather thick paste of palm oil and ngula and then to separate the locks and roll them up so that they form small, very irregular balls. To enhance this hairdo, the native does not hesitate to insert peanuts into the hair, first smearing them carefully with ngula paste in order to conceal the deception.

No less interesting is the full ceremonial regalia of the chiefs of the Lake Leopold II tribes. This varies according to the importance of the chief, but it always includes a number of cowries and one or several brass disks attached to the hairdo and the loincloth. The right to wear disks in the hairdo dates from olden times and is reserved to the chiefs and great dignitaries by ancestral custom.

The practice is found all along the Lukenie. From Lake Leopold II to Dekese, these disks have the same shape and



Fig. 103. An Old Native Chief of Lake Leopold II Adorned with his Insignia and Accompanied by his Two Favorite Wives and his Lukembe Player.

ornamental designs. Their manufacture is reserved to the important blacksmiths upon authorization by the local Mfumuna Tse of the region. [182]

Leopard skins, iron or brass bells hung from the waist, and the right to wear certain knives of a special shape at the waist are also prerogatives of the chiefs and dignitaries throughout the Lake Leopold II and Lukenie region.

We are thus confronted with various indications in the material life which are so many indications of the common origin or kinship of these different tribes.

443 Division of labor is unknown, and each person works entirely on his own, without the help of a middleman. There are no laborers
 [177] and certainly no artisans unless there happens to be some artisan or other who learned his trade under the government or at one or other of the Mission posts and has returned to his village after having completed his contract.

As a rule, such people do not find sufficient work in their own villages, and, as they are usually in possession of a few boxes, clothes, and pots and pans which they have acquired with the savings of their monthly salary, they play the grand gentleman in their village until their goods and chattels have been used up and worn out.

"Njolemwa Bosala," he says, "I am tired of work." "Njowa l'ompele," "I am dying of the heavy, difficult work."

Several of them there return to one or the other of the centers of the White settlers and again offer themselves as craftsmen.

554 A good craftsman has a high reputation among the natives, and his social position is even a very good one for a Negro. He is able regularly to supply food for his wife and children and also to get himself clothes.

326 Although most Negroes work individually, this is not true of the smith who has to have helpers in order to do his job.

445 Since the Mongo Negro knows nothing of wages, his helpers get part of the income, consisting of mitako [a kind of metal currency]
 436 or some part of the work that has been done, either a knife or a lance, or a foot or arm ring.

I. THE SMITH'S TRADE.

326 Of the various industrial trades, that of the smith is certainly the first in rank. The smith is one of the leading people [94] in the village and one of the inevitable persons to have a decisive voice in village affairs whether in settling differences or in meetings.
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In fact, the smith is the only one of the Mongo Negroes who works regularly and does not rest on his oars. From what he earns he is able to buy quite a number of wives, and he is regarded as one of the village heads whose wishes must be consulted.

326 Whereas with us the village inn is the place where the affairs of
521 the week are noisily debated, it is at the smithy where the Mongo
571 Negroes congregate. There the elders gather -- the younger men
have no voice here; there the various differences about (or among)
wives and the impending taxes are discussed; amidst the billows of
smoke -- drawn with deep puffs out of their huge bamboo pipes --
the smith is the only one who works on and earns his living nobly.

326 The smith is the most judicious craftsman among the Mongo
428 Negroes.

His trade is practically the only one which is a family affair
and is passed on from father to son. If a smith does not have any
children, the business is taken over by his younger brother.

This right of inheritance is by no means general in the other
trades; the trade of the smith is inherited while the others are taken
up by any Tom, Dick, or Harry who happens to have a liking for them.

325 The smithy where the smith plies his trade is a wide oblong dark
348 hut (about five meters by ten meters) built alongside the public high-
way. In contrast with the other dwellings of the Negroes, the floors
of which are generally built about 20 centimeters above the road, the
floor of the smithy is dug out from 30 to 70 centimeters below the
level of the road so that one goes down a step from the road into the
smithy.

The reason why the floor of the smithy should be dug out in this
way is not quite clear to me, but most probably it is to prevent the
danger of fire when the storm winds that accompany the heavy tropi-
cal rains sweep through the huts. By digging out the floor in this way,
an earthen enclosure about half a meter high is formed around the
smithy, and this protects the smith from the wind and enables him to
continue quietly at work.

325 In spite of the primitiveness of his tools [95] and the primitive
manipulation of them, the smith knows how to get what he needs from
his implements. The forge (lotulu) is constructed as follows: a block
of wood is cut about 60 centimeters long, 40 centimeters wide, and 30
centimeters high, with a hollow pipe, half a meter long, connected
to it. This is all formed of one piece. With the aid of a banana
stalk, on which the clay is moulded, a smith's pipe is formed. The
banana stalk is removed from the clay, and the hollow pipe (boongo)
remains. Two, sometimes four, bellows (njasa) are placed on the

- 326 The objects of iron made by the Mongo smith are as follows.
411 Bibui: all that is of iron

1. Likula: arrow.
2. Bosuki: arrow for hunting pigs; also used to cut copal and spear fish.
3. Bongelo: lance.
4. Ifombolo: lance.
5. Mpokwankoi: lance.
6. Liswa: axe.

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Jokula: knives

1. Mombi; 2. Boli; 3. Bolengwa; 4. Lingonda; 5. Limenga;
6. Likodzi; 7. Efamba; 8. Momba; 9. More little knives;
10. Lizangi.

Basongo: needles

1. Ingwala.
- [413] 2. Lokili: tattooing needle.
3. Jyolo: small needle to get flea beetles out of the feet.
4. Efoli: small pin.

Ngonga: bells

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1. Ngonga ea tosisi: bells worn on the hips by women and children so that as they walk the ringing will keep away the evil spirits.
 2. Bongonga: a bell attached to the point of a war-lance which makes it like the head of a walking-stick but upside down.
 3. Lingwete: little round bell worn on the wrist by men.
 4. Elondza ea itumba: the war-bell. An oblong pipe [97] in the form of a long cup attached to a stick. It is struck with a piece of soft wood, and the sound travels surprisingly far.
- These bells are all made of wrought iron.

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The native smith works not only with iron but also with copper which he melts down in the same manner from copper sticks (longele: mitako) and old, worn copper rings.

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The copper sticks, that nowadays sell at 30 for a franc, come from Europe; copper ore is unknown here.

The copper objects made by the smith are as follows.

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Bakonga: all that is of copper

1. Bongombwa: necklace, often weighing ten kilograms or more; value, 1,000 mitako.
2. Lokolo: leg ring, weighing four to six kilograms and more; value, 200 to 500 mitako.
3. Bolongu: arm ring, not heavy.
4. Ingwete: arm ring, not heavy.
5. Bongenza: leg ring that rattles when the wearer walks.
6. Bosankere: leg ring.
7. Limpala: great leg rings in spiral form, twisted out of thick

copper wire, which cover the whole of the lower leg. They

[435]

bear much resemblance to the springs in a mattress. Among the Negroes these have a value of 500 mitako.

8. Bompulenge: resembling a small limpala, these were formerly worn on the arms by old people, but they are now out of fashion and no longer made.

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In the whole district there is only one smith, a certain Elumbu in the village Lilangi (Basankusu), who knows how to make copper bells. This Black is a celebrity to every Mongo Negro.

According to the Negroes, there is a smith, a certain Bokedzu from the vicinity of the Ikelemba River, who knew how to put a new rifle together from the parts of old broken ones and did so successfully. According to the Negroes, the government agent, however, took the rifle away from him, but in my opinion, and in that of others, this black rifle manufacturer belongs in the realm of fable, the more so as a Negro is not at all afraid of a lie.

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